

2,000 fighting men and women have died on behalf of the United States in Iraq, anyone who even comments on this, is undermining morale, should not even be allowed to make a comment unless they will be designated as having a political agenda. He went on to state that anyone commenting on the fact that 2,000 fighting men and women have died in Iraq in our name, that anyone who even comments on that at this stage is not entitled to regard themselves as being truly a patriotic American by implication. He went on to say that this does not even rise to the level of a story.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I bet it was a story to the parents and loved ones of the fighting man who died No. 2,000. This is a benchmark, yes, a benchmark of the failure and our failure here in the Congress to come to grips with what the word "sacrifice" really means.

We are not sacrificing in this country. We are watching it on TV. We are adding it up. We are looking at it, observing it, and not really understanding our obligation and our responsibility to the true sacrifice of these fighting men and women.

HELPING THE AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

(Mr. KUCINICH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, recent events in the State of Ohio makes it urgent that this Congress address issues that relate to the automotive industry. Delphi's recent bankruptcy filing may result in the closing of several Ohio plants that provide thousands of jobs. General Motors' sharp cutbacks in health care benefits for UAW members and retirees as well as Ford's announcement of sharp job cutbacks beginning in January of 2006 possibly affecting at least one major auto production facility make it imperative that we come together to do everything we can to help protect America's automotive industry.

And we are doing that in Ohio by organizing not only our elected officials and our labor officials but the business community in coming together to address the challenge to one of our State's largest employment sectors that can only be met by a coordinated effort of our entire delegation.

The automotive industry is in a state of crisis. We are cooperating to bring together all of the resources possible to make sure that we protect the jobs of autoworkers as well as all the allied unions who work with them and to make sure that one of America's great industries has the strength to endure.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SODREL). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, and

under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

THE NATIONAL INSTANT CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK SYSTEM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, last week in this House, we passed a gun liability bill, and we gave immunity to the gun manufacturers and gun dealers that have never seen the likes of before.

With this passage of the bill and with the President being there to sign it, we are going to be counting on the NICS system more than ever to make sure that those that should not be able to buy guns should not be able to get them. It is going to put added responsibility onto the NICS system, and the NICS system is not ready.

People know that a computer is only as good as the information that is given to it. I want the Members to look at this sign. In 25 States, 40 percent of felons can buy guns, no questions asked, mainly because 25 States have entered less than 60 percent of their felons into their computer systems.

When we talk about trying to prevent gun violence in this country, I have offered numerous solutions that are common sense certainly to try to protect the American people; and yet this House, unfortunately, has not done anything to try to reduce gun violence in this country. In 13 States, subjects of restraining orders can buy guns, no questions asked. Thirteen States do not list restraining orders, and yet certainly it is part of what we know that those that are under restraining orders are not supposed to be able to buy guns.

This month we are also talking about domestic violence awareness; and yet we see constantly that we do not list those that have been served with restraining orders, that there is no protection at all.

All States sell guns to those on terrorist watch lists. All States sell guns to those that are on a terrorist watch list.

The majority of us here in Congress fly a couple of times a week. We go through the search. We take off our shoes. At one point some of us are actually on that watch list, and we are able to get off it when we find out when a mistake is made. And yet we do know that there are terrorists that are not allowed to fly on our planes; yet they can go into any one of our States and they can buy a gun. Where is the common sense in that? Terrorists cannot fly, but they can buy guns in any State in this country.

H.R. 1415 is a bill that I introduced a couple of years ago. It actually passed here on the House floor by voice vote. Unfortunately, the Senate did not have

enough time to pick it up. I think the time is really now to look at the NICS Improvement and Enforcement Act and it is time to pass it again.

If we are going to give gun immunity to our gun dealers and to our gun manufacturers, we still should be doing something to make sure that the people of the United States have the best protection possible.

This bill is actually good for gun dealers. It saves lives. It is time for common sense. It is time for us to try to change the way we talk about gun violence, the second amendment, here in this Chamber.

I honestly do not know that many people that want to take away the right of someone to own a gun. What we are trying to do is put common sense into our gun laws to prevent people from dying, prevent accidents, and also try to save the taxpayers money.

When we talk about spending over \$200 billion, \$200 billion, a year associated with gun violence, health care related to gun violence in this country, I think that is quite a bit of money. When we are talking about sometime this week possibly having a budget reconciliation, and I am going to be in the Committee on Education and the Workforce tomorrow and I understand that we are going to be cutting anywhere from \$3 billion to \$4 billion on top of the \$13 billion we have already cut out of higher education, I think \$200 billion a year could help us. But the House still does not have the will.

I am hoping that people will listen. I am hoping that people will understand that this is common sense; that if we do the background checks, we can certainly prevent an awful lot of people from buying the guns who should not be buying the guns. Maybe we could save some lives. Maybe we could have education for the parents that buy the guns, that they should be buying child safety locks to make sure that their children do not get ahold of a gun. There are so many common-sense things that we can do.

I hope now that the House has passed their major legislation on blocking any kind of tort reform or passing tort reform for the gun industry and the NRA has got their number one issue done for the year, that we can start talking about how we are going to save lives, how we are going to prevent injuries, how we are going to save money in the health care system because of needless killings and accidental deaths and suicides. These are things that affect so many families in different parts of our country on a daily basis. I will be talking about this over the next several months. I am determined to get this passed. I hope my colleagues will be there with me.

□ 1945

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SODREL). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. MORAN of Kansas addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

AFTA AND DRUG CONTROL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, last month, 10,500 North Carolinians lost their jobs. Many of those jobs were in the manufacturing sector. Why? Misguided trade policies like "Most Favored Nation" trade status for China, Trade Promotion Authority, and an explosion of free trade agreements like NAFTA and CAFTA.

It appears this administration wants to eliminate more U.S. manufacturing jobs by signing another free trade agreement, this one with the low-wage countries such as Colombia, Ecuador and Peru. This agreement is called AFTA, Andean Free Trade Agreement. It is being negotiated as we speak.

In addition to eliminating U.S. jobs, AFTA is likely to increase the amount of cocaine coming into this country. U.S. negotiators are pushing the Colombians to agree to provisions that will force many of their poor farmers into cocaine production. That cocaine will undoubtedly come flooding into American neighborhoods. I urge my colleagues to look into this issue, because if there is one thing this country does not need, it is a new trade agreement that exports U.S. jobs and increases imports of deadly drugs.

Mr. Speaker, I think too many times we in the Congress try to do what we think is right, but when it comes to sending jobs down to Central America or to China or other countries, it is not good for the American workers.

Mr. Speaker, with that, tonight I am going to close by asking the American people to please remember our men and women in uniform who are serving in Iraq and Afghanistan, to please remember the families who have lost loved ones in Afghanistan and Iraq, and I close by asking God to please bless our men and women in uniform.

HONORING THE 2,000 AMERICANS KILLED IN IRAQ

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EMANUEL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, today marks a solemn milestone: 2,000 American military personnel have now given their lives fighting in Iraq; 244 Americans have also fallen in Afghanistan. We owe these brave men and women and their families a debt of gratitude that can never be fully repaid.

In July of this year, I led a bipartisan group of 21 Members of Congress in reading the names of the fallen into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD over a 2-week period of time. Tonight I continue this tribute by reading the names

of some of those who have fallen most recently.

In the words of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, each of these heroes stands in the unbroken line of patriots who have dared to die that freedom might live and grow and increase in its blessings. God bless them, and keep each of the brave Americans whose memory we honor tonight in our memory: Staff Sergeant Jeremy W. Doyle, Specialist Ray M. Fuhrmann II, Lance Corporal Phillip C. George, Private 1st Class Timothy J. Seamans, 1st Lieutenant Laura M. Walker, Sergeant Willard Todd Partridge, Private 1st Class Elden D. Arcand, 2nd Lieutenant James J. Cathey, Specialist Blake W. Hall, 1st Lieutenant Joshua M. Hyland, Sergeant Michael R. Lehmler, Staff Sergeant Brian Lee Morris, Specialist Joseph C. Nurre, Private Christopher L. Palmer, Sergeant Joseph Daniel Hunt, Specialist Hatim S. Kathiria, Staff Sergeant Ictoir P. Lieurance, Private 1st Class Ramon Romero, Master Sergeant Chris S. Chapin, 1st Lieutenant Carlos J. Diaz, Sergeant 1st Class Trevor J. Diesing, Master Sergeant Ivica Jerak, Corporal Timothy M. Shea, Staff Sergeant Damion G. Campbell, Specialist Joseph L. Martinez, Sergeant 1st Class Obediah J. Kolath, Chief Warrant Officer Dennis P. Hay, 2nd Lieutenant Charles R. Rubado, Major Gregory J. Fester, Specialist Jason E. Ames, Captain Lowell T. Miller II, Sergeant Monta S. Ruth, Sergeant George Ray Draughn, Jr., 1st Lieutenant Derek S. Hines, Staff Sergeant Robert Lee Hollar, Jr., Sergeant 1st Class Lonnie J. Parson, Lance Corporal Ryan J. Nass, Sergeant Matthew Charles Bohling, Specialist Luke C. Williams, Hospitalman Robert N. Martens, Specialist Jeffrey A. Williams, Sergeant Franklin R. Vilorio, Staff Sergeant Jude R. Jonaus, Staff Sergeant Christopher L. Everett, Specialist Jeremy M. Campbell, Sergeant Kurtis Dean K. Arcala, Seaman Apprentice Robert D. Macrum, Sergeant Alfredo B. Silva, Lance Corporal Shane C. Swanberg, Sergeant Matthew L. Deckard.

Mr. Speaker, in the words of President Abraham Lincoln, who wrote to the mother of five fallen soldiers, "I pray that our Heavenly Father may assuage the anguish of your bereavement, and leave you only the cherished memory of the loved and lost, and the solemn pride that must be yours to have laid so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of freedom."

I would also like to thank the brave men and women who continue to serve our Nation in both Iraq and Afghanistan and throughout the world and serve with distinction. Our thoughts and prayers and gratitude are with you and your families at this time until you return home.

To the families whose names I have read here tonight and other nights, if I have mispronounced your names, my apology. I want you to know your family member, your son and your daugh-

ter, your brothers and sisters, your fathers and mothers, that we only meant to put your name in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD and to always be part of our country and our community.

God bless you.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would remind Members that remarks are supposed to be directed to the Speaker, rather than the viewing audience.

PANDEMIC PLAN: AVIAN INFLUENZA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to take a minute this evening to talk about something that has been in the news a lot lately, and something that this Congress is going to be dealing with more and more as the next several months go by, and that is a discussion about the avian flu, or the so-called bird flu. I wanted to use these remarks tonight to talk about what is the bird flu; perhaps some history that may be important; what is a pandemic, and what makes a pandemic a pandemic; and then, finally, what can be done to prepare ourselves and our country if indeed this pandemic is on the horizon.

It is important to remember, Mr. Speaker, that the influenza virus has been with us for a long time. It is constantly changing and undergoes a continuous process of evolution and changes. Generally, these are small changes referred to as genetic drift. It is why we have to get a flu shot every year. But occasionally, occasionally, the virus undergoes a major evolutionary change and undergoes a genetic shift, rather than just the drift that we see from year to year.

For the past several years, a flu type known as H3N2 has been the type against which we commonly receive our yearly flu shot. Because of genetic drift, a new vaccination is necessary every year. With the absence of a regular yearly update in the flu vaccination, we would all have some immunity that would carry over from year to year. But approximately every 30 years there is a major change in the flu virus worldwide. This type of major change took place in 1957, and 170,000 people in this country died from the Asiatic flu, and in 1968, when 35,000 died from the Hong Kong flu.

Mr. Speaker, the term "pandemic" applies when there is no underlying immunity within the community to the particular type of flu virus. A pandemic occurs with periodic evolution of the influenza virus.

Assumptions about prior pandemics become part of our planning for the avian flu, a particularly virulent strain